

a single heretic. On the other hand, the savage policy of repression which he finally adopted and pursued with such terrible results, was the surest method of straining even the servile loyalty of the people to breaking point. In the face of atrocities like those perpetrated in Dauphin^e, it would not be surprising if men were driven to question the right of even an absolute king to play the tyrant in the service of the savage bigotry preached by a Cardinal Tournon and practised by a horde of ruffians. In the long run, the claim to burn, torture, murder men in deference to intolerant and tyrannic edicts did make rebels of heretics. The heretic at last grasped the sword to defend his life and take vengeance on his oppressors. It was not heresy, but the brutal repressions of it, that brought things to this pass. Francis I. was the real "perturber of the kingdom," when in an evil hour for France and for his dynasty he definitely gave himself into the hands of zealots like Cardinal Tournon, and steeled his heart against the more moderate policy of men like Cardinal Du Bellay.

In spite of repressive edicts and repeated holocausts of heretics, heresy continued to grow even in the reign of Francis. "The Lutherans," remarks Cavalli in 1546, "are everywhere very numerous, and have possession of entire towns (Caen, Poitiers, La Rochelle, and several cities of Provence), where the Protestant cult is not publicly avowed, but tacitly allowed." Its growth was phenomenal in that of his successor, Henry II. Edict succeeded edict in vain. Equally vain the establishment of a special tribunal in the Parliament of Paris—the *Chambre Ardente*—for the trial of heretics. Nay, the papal bull itself of April 1557, which the Parliament registered by royal command, appointing three cardinal inquisitors for the whole of France, had little effect in stamping out the plague of heresy. There was no lack of zeal in persecution, and fearful enough were the scenes that followed the barbarous sentences of the *Chambre Ardente* and the provincial courts, as may be read in the histories and martyr-books of the period. Zeal and brutality failed utterly to preserve the monopoly of orthodoxy to the traditional Church. "The Lutherans," as the heretics were erroneously termed, swelled in numbers to such a degree, especially in the south-west, that an assembly of the numerous